

REMARKS

Claims 11-23, 36-39, 42-65, 68-73, 83-90, 92, 93, 95-101, 103, and 106-133 are pending in this application. Claims 15, 19, 20, 23 and 58 have been rejected and claims 16-18, 21, 22 and 59-61 have been objected to only as being dependent upon rejected base claims. Claims 11-23, 36-39, 42-65, 68-73, 83-90, 92, 93, 95-101, 103 and 106-133, have been found allowable. Claims 16 and 59 have been cancelled and claims 15, 58 and 97 have been revised. Claims 15, 36, 57, 58, 62, 87, 92, 95 and 97 are independent.

The Examiner is thanked for the allowance of claims 11-14, 36-39, 42-57, 62-65, 68-73, 83-90, 92, 93, 95-101, 103 and 106-133. Those claims have been maintained unchanged, save for claim 97, and so are believed to remain in condition for allowance at least for the reasons given previously. The change to claim 97 is not believed to alter the allowability of that claim.

The Examiner also is thanked for the indicated allowability, if suitably rewritten in independent form, of claims 16-18, 21, 22 and 59-61. This has been done; the subject matter of allowable claims 16 and 59 has been introduced into claims 15 and 58, respectively.

Claims 15, 19, 20, 23 and 58 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,164,769 to Inada et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,257,710 to Haigo. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection and submit the following arguments in support thereof.

Claims 15 and 58 now respectively incorporate the subject matter of claims 16 and 59, which the Examiner held were allowable. Accordingly, claims 15 and 58 are allowable at least for the same reasons.

The remaining rejected claims, claims 19, 20 and 23, all ultimately depend from and so incorporate by reference the features of claim 15, including those features which patentably distinguish over the cited art. Claims 19, 20 and 23 are therefore allowable at least for the same reasons as claim 15.

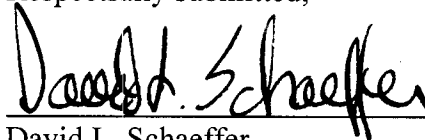
For all the foregoing reasons, favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

Applicants have made a diligent effort to place this application in condition for allowance and submit that the claims are in condition for allowance. If for any reason, however, the Examiner should deem that this application is not in condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the number listed below to resolve any outstanding issues prior to issuing a further Office Action.

Other than the fee for the accompanying Information Disclosure Statement, no fees are believed to be due. Nevertheless, the Commissioner is authorized to charge any fee now or hereafter due in connection with the prosecution of this application to Deposit Account No. 19-4709.

Respectfully submitted,



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